

# Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

## WISE COUNTY/TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP WATER SHORTAGE

### SITUATION REPORT # 27

1230 Hours November 7, 2005

*New Information in Bold Italics*

*Next Conference Call is scheduled for Wednesday, November 9, 2005, 0930 hours  
Information for Situation Report should be submitted to the VEOC no later than 1200 hours daily*

### SUMMARY

*The town of Big Stone Gap continues to experience water shortages due to drought like conditions. Actions are being coordinated with surrounding communities and the state to alleviate the adverse conditions. Contingency plans are in place for these actions to continue through November 30, 2005.*

### EXECUTIVE ACTION

**EOC Activation:** The Virginia VEOC is at Increased Readiness condition and augmented with limited staffing.

**State of Emergency:** On October 7, 2005, Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency to exist for Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to assist these localities in responding to a critical water shortage. Governor Warner directed appropriate assistance be rendered by agencies of the state government to respond to needs in Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to alleviate adverse conditions created by the water shortage. Executive Order 99 (2005) was amended to include an Open Burning Ban on Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap.

**Protective Actions:** Local Emergency Declared: Wise County declared a local emergency on September 26, 2005.

### WEATHER

**Forecast:** Southwest VA: Monday 7 November – Mostly sunny and warm, high temperatures in upper 60s to low 70s, light winds. Monday night – Partly cloudy, low temperatures mid to upper 40s, light winds.  
Tuesday 8 November – Partly cloudy, high temperatures upper 60s to low 70s, Southwest winds 10 MPH or less, 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Tuesday night – Partly cloudy, low temperatures in low 50s, light winds, 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms.

### OPERATIONS SECTION

**Local Liaison:** VDEM Local Support Services Division Region Four Coordinator is available as needed.

### EMERGENCY SERVICES BRANCH

**ESF 4 – Firefighting:** Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOT)  
The VDOT has signs in place notifying residents of the burn ban.

**ESF 8 – Health & Medical:** Virginia Department of Health (VDH)  
Dr. Sue Cantrell is the State point of contact. VDH has discontinued monitoring gastrointestinal illnesses and will continue to monitor chicken pox cases at local hospitals and schools in Big Stone Gap during the three-week incubation period.

Mt. Empire Older Citizens group distributing bottled water to at risk citizens with low income. VDH monitoring food service establishment's compliance with plans, monitoring results of water and chlorine tests of temporary water facilities. VDH is compiling reports on current and future water sources. **Water test results are being compiled into a report. Citizens inquiring about connecting to old wells/springs and are being referred to Building Officials for Town or County. VDH is providing information on private companies to treat and test water source. Clinch Haven Farm well has been removed as a water source. Well at Mt. Empire Community College and two wells in Appalachia are to be tested this week.**

**ESF 13 - Public Safety & Security:**

Virginia Department of Military Affairs/National Guard (VDMA/VNG)  
The VNG continues the blivet support mission. Eleven blivets are in place. Twelve soldiers remain on mission.

**HUMAN SERVICES BRANCH**

**ESF 11 – Agriculture & Natural Resources:**

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)  
DEQ continues to work with the town of Big Stone Gap to monitor water production, water sales and calculate the amount of water losses on a monthly basis. **DEQ is requesting loss water report from Big Stone Gap.**

**INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT BRANCH**

**ESF 1 – Transportation:**

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)  
VDOT has four message boards in the Big Stone Gap area and messages are being changed frequently so members of the community don't become complacent. A VDOT tractor is being used to pull stainless steel tankers of water

**LOGISTICS SECTION**

**ESF 7 – Resource Support:**

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)  
The VEOC is coordinating requests for assistance from the locality and state agencies, and is facilitating conference calls with the locality and state agencies. VEOC requested a more detailed account of actual daily water output from all water sources being utilized. This accounting will be shared with all interested parties. VEOC requested Incident Management Team develop timeline for blivet management.

**LOCAL ACTIVITIES**

There is a renewed emphasis with Public Service Announcements to inform citizens the situation has not improved and still remains critical. Town Engineer to check and determine amount of water in Powell River cave #1. Current Powell River stream flow is 18cfs. Big Cherry Dam valve is slightly opened to maintain fish and wildlife and very little water is being drawn from the reservoir as a water source. Plans are being made to winterize temporary water facilities. Local Incident Management Team continues to develop long range plans including evaluating alternate water sources. **Norton and Appalachia water supplies are being monitored due to decreasing water levels.**

Wise County submitting Local Situation Report daily. **County officials are working with Town of Big Stone Gap officials to submit reports requested by DEQ.** Appalachia and Norton reservoir water levels are decreasing and both sources might be forced to withdraw as additional suppliers. County is investigating routing water from Wise PSA/Dorchester as additional water source.